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Nixon Reveals His Other Self

A reading of former Vice President Nixon's book, "Six Crises," reveals a hitherto unknown and probably unsuspected side of the man. Outwardly, Mr. Nixon had generally exhibited a rather hardened political posture, seemingly immune to emotion and to sensitivity. His book, however, shreds this mantle to bits and permits the world to see an extremely sensitive person, not quite in keeping with the popular conception of a seasoned politician.

In telling of his televised campaign debates with John F. Kennedy, for example, Mr. Nixon seems to rail against fate; to complain bitterly of the way circumstances treated him. His statement—now refuted and admitted by him to be erroneous—that Mr. Kennedy knew of the United States' intervention in Cuba during the debates, indicates a side of Mr. Nixon's nature that will do him no good in the future. He still does not explain why he did not go to Mr. Kennedy, in the best interests of the nation, and ask him point blank about the latter's knowledge of the Cuban matter. Instead, he had an assistant call the Central Intelligence Agency and then

accepted the aide's report that Mr. Kennedy had been told of the project. Thus, he became quite aggrieved.

And, the former vice president also discloses another side in his tendency to rationalize on his own faults; to examine himself and to offer excuses for what he has found. In discussing the Alger Hiss case, for instance, Mr. Nixon ruefully avers that the resentment of many people toward him for his treatment of Hiss probably cost him the 1960 presidential election. But, he then says, had it not been for the way he handled the Hiss case, he probably would not have become vice president.

Altogether, it would appear that Mr. Nixon has more or less sealed his own fate with his "Six Crises." He most assuredly has shown the public a side of his personality that does not speak well for him as a national leader. We still find it difficult to understand just why he wrote the book. The words therein do not sound at all like the Nixon of a few years ago.

Whatever the reason for Mr. Nixon's book, it must be admitted that it has done him no good.